

LIFE COURSE DILEMMA: A MIXED METHOD CASE OF FEMALE NEWS REPORTERS IN PAKISTAN

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Article History:</i> Received: 10 Apr 2019 Revised: 21 Nov 2019 Accepted: 20 Jan 2020 Available Online: 31 Mar 2020</p> <hr/> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Female news reporters, Work-life balance, Patriarchy, discrimination, harassment.</p> <hr/> <p><i>JEL Classification:</i> G21, G23</p>	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Female participation in the workforce is essential for the accurate and efficient economic development of any country. In a country like Pakistan, where the number of women is equivalent to the number of men in the community, female labor force participation remains relatively low particularly the female news reporters. To enhance the female participation in economic growth, this paper focused on unearthing the issues faced by currently employed women news reporters in terms of two prominent dimensions: professional life, and personal life. The reason for conducting this research was to identify the factors which discourage women to join the employment force with regard to media and how to cater them.</p> <p><i>Design/Methodology/Approach:</i> An integrative mixed method analysis (instrument development model) under exploratory design was used for the collection of and analysis of data. Initially Semi-structured interviews were conducted and then verified it through survey method. The results were analyzed with the help of thematic analysis using NVivo 11 (for qualitative data) and as well as SPSS (for quantitative data).</p> <p><i>Findings:</i> The results concluded that women status in society, marital status, household dynamics, workplace burden and workplace behavior are the main factors that affect the productivity level of female media workers that hinders the women to become financial and socially independent.</p> <p><i>Implications/Originality/Value:</i> Moreover, it can also provide policy implications for the Government of Pakistan and policy makers, i.e. HR executives to look into the matter of media related females work life balance in the society.</p>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Women have been an integral part of any society or community from the beginning of time. Pakistan is a developing nation, the issues that women face here are poles apart from the concerns of the women in developed nations, like: U.K, USA, etc. (Ford, Berrang-Ford, & Paterson, 2011). It is a country where the percentage of women of the total population are around 48%. This means that the women-men ratio in the country is almost 50-50 (Fatima & Sultana, 2009). Women, since the beginning of time, have tried their level best to provide their support and services in the best and most efficient means possible. However, one problem which has persisted since the inception is the attitude towards female employment and their desire to thrive professionally particularly in case of media related jobs. Usually in media organizations women news reporters are considered as signifiers to assist men in the newsroom and the female news reporters seems to have lost their identity.

The average working woman is still faced with an overabundance of difficulties of household and employment in her everyday life (Mujahid & uz Zafar, 2012). The need for greater financial resources has finally enabled women to enter the job market in order to manage resources for their loved ones (Heath & Jayachandran, 2016). So, this is posing a serious threat to the financial opulence of households, women have now penetrated in all the sectors of the Pakistani framework: from public to private sectors, from schools to universities from print media to social media, women are now participating in jobs everywhere. Moreover, whenever it's about women who joined media organizations it is usually considered that they can carry on with the soft stories regarding fashion and culture. Contrarily the women in media are doing the stories on terrorism, accidents, disasters etc. from the last few decades

and the women have shown their abilities radically. Hence, this study has been developed to carry out research and gain understanding of the varying issues which media related female news reporters have, and the associated personal problems they come upon due to their employment status.

Besides the patriarchal nature of Pakistan, women are still emerging as bread winners due to the crippling economic conditions in the country (Montero & Rau, 2015). Since the economic situation of the average household in Pakistan has hit rock bottom in the last few years, the concept of limited employed members and multiple dependents in families has become almost obsolete. Women are now emerging as an integral part in the economy and administration of Pakistan, as female participation in various sectors, like law, Politics, Medicine, Management, Media etc., is increasing as time passes. However, the problem of the female population was not restricted to just enter the work force. Regardless of the fact that women are now becoming an active part of the workforce, their acceptance in the community is yet to be fully established and acknowledged. Even with the emergence of the educated classes, women are still being subjected to physical, psychological, and financial torment in the form of harassment from men in various segments of daily life (Shekhawat, 2015).

The main concern of this study relates to the motivational drivers and challenges/issues women news reporters face in order to hold a profession in Pakistan. The study explores the motivational drivers and factors that boost up the women productivity level (at both personal and professional domains) and various demographic, socio-cultural and socio-economic issues of women news reporters in the Pakistani society. The women being studied are the T.V. news reporters. The study is an effort to address the following questions:

1. How women news reporter perceived about the status given to women in Islam and society?
2. What are their insights about the role and contribution of women?
3. What are the challenges and barriers (related to work-life concerns) that affect the women productivity level?

There are a number of texts available pinpointing the various issues women are faced with in developing and religiously submerged countries, like Pakistan (Bushra & Wajaha, 2015; Hassan & Keyani, 2015; Khan, Sabri, & Nasir, 2016). Very few studies on women news reporters of Pakistan exist. However, the gap that was identified during the research process was the absence of a unified discussion about the various issues in the hands of these ladies. The previous studies seem considering a singular issue, while this paper takes a holistic approach, thereby focusing on various concerns; ranging from: domestic issues; workplace concerns; glass ceiling; and psychological impacts which women news reporters, married and single, are forced to deal with. The present study, therefore, has the core aim of researching and identifying the issues which women face in their attempt to acquire and retain a profession in a male centric and patriarchal society as Pakistan. The study also focuses on identifying these problems being born of women working in media-based organizations from varying age brackets as well as women with different marital status. The research is aimed to understand how women in Pakistan, a country with stern fundamentals and harsh ideals, are able to thrive and progress in the economy and work against the taboo and social stigmas which exist in relation to working women in male powered areas.

1.1 Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to bring to light the various issues/challenges being faced by news reporter women in the professional fields of Pakistan. The main objective of the paper is to gain insights about the issues being tolerated by working ladies in Pakistan. Following are the sub objectives of this study:

- To identify the perception of media working women about their status in Islam as well as in society.
- To get their insights about the contribution of women in developing self, family, and country.
- To identify the issues/challenges faced by media working women in their personal and professional field.
- To determine the impact of motivational drivers (status and contribution) on productivity level of media working women.
- To determine the impact of challenges and issues faced by media working women on their level of productivity.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study is extremely important as it helps to provide insights into the dilemma of the female working population in media organizations in Pakistan. Since women form almost half of the population in the country, to have a meager amount of that counterpart formulate a minority in the work force must have strong reasons. This study sheds light on the issues which women, who dare to participate professionally as news reporters, are faced with and how these problems might be negatively impacting other aspiring women and propelling them away from the idea of becoming self-sufficient and independent. This paper can also help to shed light upon serious social ills, like

harassment and discrimination, which exist in the society and the workplace but are often pushed under the rug. This paper can help find to reinstate the existence of these issues and find a policy and law makers find and execute solutions to these issues to make Pakistan a secure state for all of its residents, regardless of any differentiating factors.

The study is useful in providing practical implications for encouraging more women to enter the workforce. The current study may aid in understanding the current standing of the working women in even in the media organizations in Pakistan and how their issues can be resolved in order to bolster their morale and improve their efficiency and performance. Practical implications of this research include finding out how to increase awareness about the need for the financial and professional independence of women in the profession particularly media related profession; discovering solutions to the homework life conflicts women news reporters face. Moreover, the study can provide valuable insights which can then be used to cater to workplace issues women face. Solutions to harassment and workplace discrimination can be discovered which can then be used to develop laws providing better working environments for women. Lastly, managerial problems can also be resolved, such stereotyping and alienation of women in the workplaces, allowing for the economy of the country to flourish and boost of overall productivity and performance levels.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Islamic perspective on the status of women

In Islamic perspective the males and females are considered to be morally equal. Islamic perspective has improved the women status as compared to the initial Arab cultures where females were infanticide and not considered persons equal to males (Khurshid, 2015). Islam accentuates the women's rights of inheritance, staying at matrimonial residence and seeking financial benefits through their husbands and depending on guardians in Iddah or Iddat (period of waiting). Generally, the women status is not according to the Quranic ideals in the prevailing scenario where patriarchy is a norm. So, the women status has become major concern in the modern era's reformist Islam. Females are allowed to work in Islam under certain conditions (Vandello, 2016) like if she is short of financial resources and is able to maintain balance in her work and personal life like she will not be neglecting her role as a mother or wife. It is the responsibility of Muslim community to organize and manage work place requirements where her rights will be respected. Islamic perspectives allow females to work under conditions where they will be able to follow the decorum of Islamic laws.

2.2 Status of women in Pakistan

In Pakistan the status of women varies due to uneven socio-economic development and the effects of social ties. Throughout, human rights are spreading out due to which females are becoming more secure not only in their homes from domestic violence and at their work as well. Even the constitution of Pakistan also supports the fundamental rights of all citizens. The well-known example of women leadership can be exhibited from two times elected Prime Minister of Pakistan is Benazir Bhutto. Contrarily, still the Pakistani females are faced with social, economic, and cultural issues to exercise in balance the life course agenda. Women in Pakistan are relatively the women at work usually lack empowerment in decisions as compared to males. The Pakistani culture is the clear-cut depiction of patriarchy. Decisions are usually taken by the male heads of the family. In Pakistan people are usually nurtured having specific religious beliefs which are the foundation of different social and cultural perspectives.

2.3 Women participation in Pakistan economic growth

Women's role towards their economic empowerment and prosperity of the world will become more crucial in the near future. Hence, there is a greater need of economic empowerment through financial literacy, positive financial attitude and enhanced financial wellbeing of women. Working women are considered as financially literate and have positive financial attitude. Now with increase in the literacy rate of females in Pakistan i.e. 45 percent against male literacy rate of 69 percent and the overall female literacy rate is 25 percent which is quite low (The Nation, August 5, 2016) the women are contributing not only in the development of family but also in the country. Education is important to enhance the status of women in the society. The increasing literacy rate among males and females can be effective to reduce the gender disparity as well (Veldhuis, Drabble, Riggle, Wootton, & Hughes, 2018). Now a large number of females are working in high occupational fields (Triana, Jayasinghe, Pieper, Delgado, & Li, 2018). The gender disparity and wage gap still somewhat persist and women are not earning as according to the males (Jali & Islam, 2017; Meraj & Sadaqat, 2016).

2.4 Socio-cultural and socio-economic perspective on the status of women

The socio-cultural and socio-economic perspective on the status of women effects their lives irrespective of women living in rural or in urban areas. The social scenario is the clear-cut reflection of the patriarchy and gender

discrimination. In the developing nations the basic reason of persisting discrimination regarding gender is because of the social influences, organizational settings and cultural norms and traditions (Rehman, Moazzam, & Ansari, 2015; Zakar, Zakar, & Abbas, 2016). Women do not enjoy their identities and usually are dependent upon their male representatives for taking the minute decisions even. The role of women is considered secondary as Pakistan is purely a patriarchal society (Panahwar, Abro, Khawaja, Siddiqui, & Farshad, 2017). The Pakistanis have their mindset based on the traditional and social perspectives they are following thoroughly generation after generation. Due to these unavoidable socio-cultural and socio-economic issues Pakistani females remain neglected human resource.

2.5 Motivational drivers for women participation in Pakistan

The motivational driving force for females is to become independent and be able to manage her expenses herself instead of looking towards others to fulfill the slightest tasks of their life (Muneer, 2017). The important need to fulfill the economic necessities by herself is the driving force and most of the time this economic necessity is the reason of sticking to one job and feel satisfied and contented to work in the manner they are working as it becomes their comfort zone and they stick to the same jobs for years even on the same designations. Contrarily, the males get promoted quickly and may get higher rewards and may switch their jobs quickly (Bushra & Wajiha, 2015). Another motivational factor for women being participant of working class is to improve their financial position (Akhtar, Ayub, & Anwar, 2019). At times social recognition becomes the driving factor and whatever the type of work activities they are involved in it depends upon the knowledge, skills, personal characteristics and family support to carry on with the activities regarding them being employed or working class.

2.6 Constraints and challenges for women productivity

Women's empowerment is based on multiple components i.e. decision-making authority, resources, opportunities, independence i.e. Female empowerment has many dimensions. It includes access to knowledge, possession of social and economic resources and more autonomy in political and economic decision-making processes. All these components and dimensions of female empowerment are interrelated and an alteration in one component will not bring a huge transformation unless all change. If females have access to the productivity of men, then both genders can work simultaneously towards the betterment of the country, and this will lead to a sustainable way out of poverty. Therefore, women should get equal work opportunities. But women have greater challenges, as they do not get the same economic opportunities as men do. They do not get access to the decent working condition and lag behind men in decision making.

2.7 Life Course Theory

Life course theory has been traditionally used by sociologists (Steege et al., 2018) to examine the dynamic nature of human lives in response to varied social structures that shape human development and life experiences. It refers to a comprehensive approach of studying individuals' lives in the context of structural and social change over the life span (Elder and Kirkpatrick, 2003; Sweet and Moen, 2006) and because of its depth to examine the larger social context in which personal choices and strategies are crafted (Hatch, 2018). In other words, the life course framework integrates both a structural approach, which looks at the impact of power dynamics and social context on an individual, and a temporal approach, which examines experiences/stories of individuals over time.

Although it provides a comprehensive lens of looking at various levels of social structures, at the same time it acknowledges change in context and individual lives (Brown, Richardson, Hargrove, & Thomas, 2016). In the light of the above discussion and keeping in mind the purpose of my study, the theoretical underpinning of this study is locked with '*life course theory*' that refers to the individual experiences to make life course choices regarding domestic and professional needs. Life course is best suitable in the context of work-life balance dilemma that will allow me to dig out in-depth about holistic perspective of female news reporters in the context of Pakistan (Farrington, 2017).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants

To fulfill the objectives of study, participants of the study were selected who were an active part of the Pakistani workforce in media industry. Initially, for semi-structured interviews, 11 female news reporters were selected from different media platforms mentioned as below. Then for the verification of their response, quantitative research strategy was used in which survey method was adopted to collect data from 89 female news reporters from same media platforms in which interview participants are currently working. Survey form were sent to 107 female news reporters from which 89 respondents (83% response rate) gave complete, reliable and accurate response.

3.2 Sampling and Data Collection method

The sampling technique for the research and data collection utilized two different sampling techniques: Non-probability for qualitative research and probability for quantitative research. Non-probability techniques included convenience sampling, and snowball sampling as suggested by Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016). Convenience sampling was used to gain access to working women within accessible social environments. From there onwards, snowball sampling was used to fulfill the requirement of 11 interview respondents who are from media particularly female news reporters through referrals of respondents. While in case of probability sampling, simple random sampling was used to select female news reporters belonging to different media platforms as suggested by Florea, Valcea, Hamdani, and Dougherty (2019). The data were initially collected through a series of predetermined (semi-structured) interview and then for its verification collected through self-administered close ended questionnaire to get response from large sample size as a quantitative research strategy (Palinkas et al., 2015). For semi-structured interviews, the questions were provided to respondents prior to the interview to facilitate them in order to comprehend the questions and the research paper to the best of their ability (Etikan et al., 2016). The aim of conducting semi-structured interviews was to identify stable thematic categories that are generated inductively from narrative response given by participants against specific interview question.

3.3 Interview Protocol & Measures

The protocol for the interview consisted of 19-20 questions which were used to acquire insights into the problems of media related working women, and the varying problems that exist in relation to their marital status and personal life. The questions were inspired and adapted from various literature based on the issues of working women from media and were then improvised in order to better match and cater to the research objective of this paper. To testify the output of qualitative research, survey form is developed on the basis of themes derived from qualitative research output along with the support of existing literature related to work-life balance dilemma and women productivity in terms of personal and professional outcomes. The adapted scale taken from studied conducted by Moir (2006) and Burke (2001) that is exactly matched with the concept given by participants of current research during interviews.

3.4 Data Analysis Strategy

The data collected as a result of this research was analyzed Nvivo-11 software to analyze the qualitative data. In this analysis different nodes are being used to represent the concepts, processes, ideas, etc. reflecting different themes (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Thematic analysis alludes to pinpointing, analyzing, and recording the recurring or varying patterns that exist within the collected data and are critical to the portrayal of a variable and are related to particular research questions (Maxwell & Miller, 2008). Furthermore, for the analysis of quantitative data SPSS 24 was used to perform correlation among thematic variable and regression analysis.

3.5 Reliability & Validity

The data collected and information presented in the paper had credible origins was something of great concern. In order, a set of reliability and validity techniques were adopted. For qualitative data, member checking (analyzes the authenticity of the information by cross-checking the data via the varying answers provided by the multiple participant engagement and self-reflection (involves allotting self-determined meaning to the information provided by respondents) techniques were used to ensure that the information used was trustworthy and credible recommended by Zohrabi (2013) & Leung (2015).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

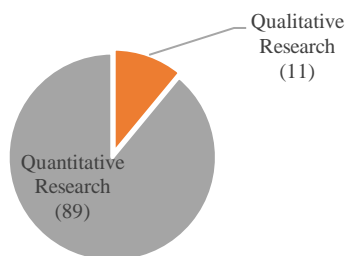
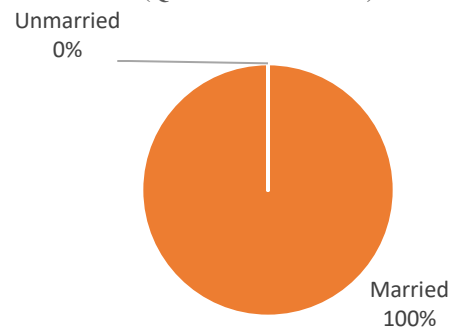
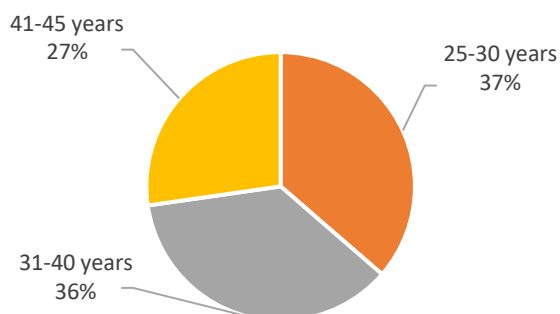
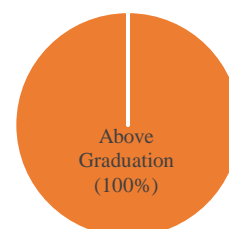
Section 4 deals with data analysis section. The project team transcribed all the interviews before coding. The interviews are more in sequence according to the interview manual but sometime goes open ended as per the need of in-depth understanding of the concept given by the participant. While for qualitative data collection, data was initially prepared as per SPSS requirement and then analyzed it accordingly.

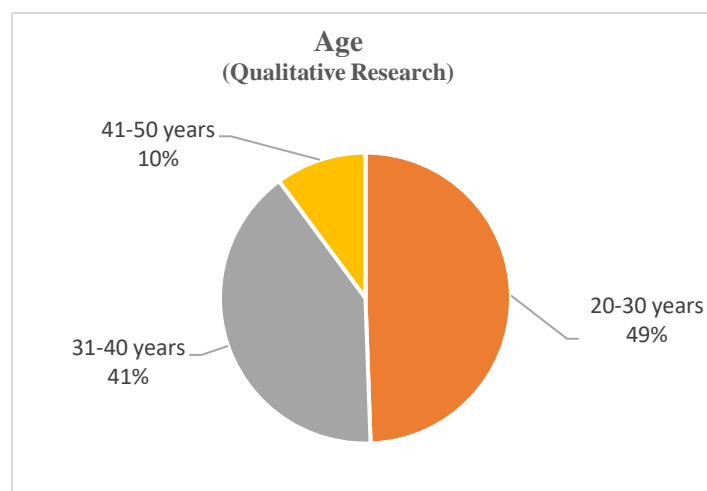
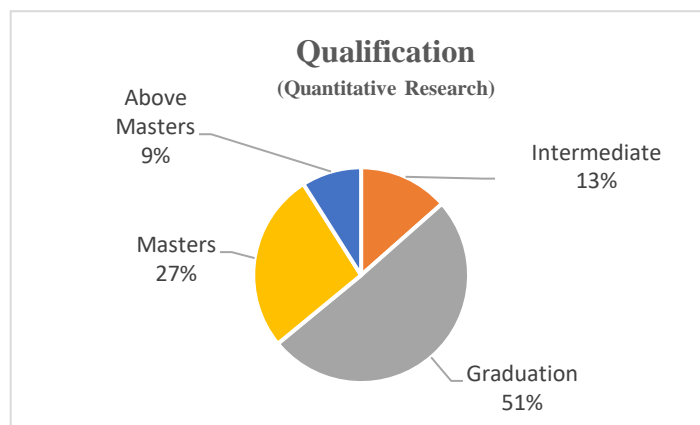
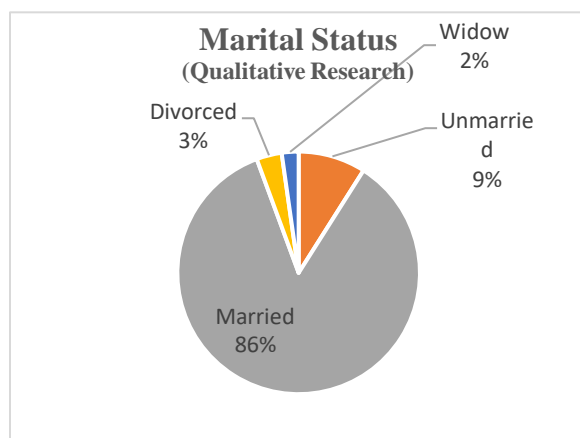
4.1 Demographic Profiling of the Participants

The profile of the participants/respondents is given as below;

Table 1. Participants Profile

Demographics	Qualitative study	Quantitative study
No. of Respondents	11	89
Media Platforms	Dunya, Geo, Neo, ARY, Dawn, News1, Waqt, Capital T.V., Waqt, City 42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediate=12 (13.48%) • Graduation=45 (50.56%) • Masters=24 (26.97%) • Above Masters=8 (8.99%)
Qualification	All above graduation	
Length of Service/Experience	2-7 years	1-10 years
	25-45 years	(20-50 years)
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25-30 years=4 (36.36%) • 31-40 years=4 (36.36%) • 41-45 years=3 (27.27%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20-30 years=44 (49.43%) • 31-40 years=36 (40.44%) • 41-50 years=9 (10.11%) • Above 50 years=0 (0%)
Location	Lahore	Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi, Peshawar, Faisalabad
Marital Status	Married (all 100%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unmarried=8 (8.99%) • Married=76 (85.39%) • Divorced=3 (3.37%) • Widow=2 (2.25%)

No. of Respondents**Marital Status**
(Qualitative Research)**Age**
(Qualitative Research)**Qualification**
(Qualitative Research)



The above table 1 and figures highlighted the demographic profiling of the participants in both qualitative and quantitative studies that are mutually combined and interpreted as mixed method study. Total 11 participants were selected for semi-structured interviews and 89 respondents were included in quantitative research for self-administered close ended questionnaire. In both studies, participants are selected from various media platforms named as Dunya, Geo, Neo, ARY, Dawn, News1, Waqt, Capital T.V., Waqt, City 42. As per their qualification, in qualitative research all participants are above graduation and in case of quantitative research 12 respondents are Intermediate (13.48%), 45 are Graduation (50.56%), 24 are Masters (26.97%) & 8 are Above Masters (8.99%). Experience range is 2-7 years for qualitative research and 1-10 years for quantitative research. As far as age is concerned, in qualitative research the participants age falls between 25-45 years and in quantitative research the respondents age varies from 20-50 years.

In both cases, the participants belong to Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, Peshawar and Faisalabad.

Lastly, the marital status of the respondents, all qualitative research participants are married (100%) and the marital status of respondents for survey method are; Unmarried=8 (8.99%), Married=76 (85.39%), Divorced=3 (3.37%) & Widow=2 (2.25%).

4.2 Women Status and Productivity level

Table 2. Women Status

<i>Inductively Developed Thematic Categories</i>					
Category	Code	Thematic Category	Key Terms		Characteristic level 3 responses
Status of Women	SW1	• Contentious rights	• Debatable	OR	• For me, it is still controversial to discuss women status in Islam and Pakistani society.
	SW2	• Access to family matters and decision	• Involvement	OR	
	SW3	• Respectable status	• decision making	OR	• Majorly women have complete access to family matters, she is involved in every matter of the family and its related decisions.
	SW4	• Dignity, honor and modesty	• suggestions		
	SW5	• No discrimination	• Well treated	OR	• I have closely observed that Religious families are giving complete respect and honor to their own irrespective to her education and working status.
	SW6	• Equal rights to attain knowledge and education	• respect, honor, protocol		
	SW7	• Freedom of marital decision	• Education	OR	• We are easy enough to select husband as per our wish, I think now people have changed their mind set.
	SW8	• Entrusted with nurturing role	• teaching OR learning		
	SW9	• Right to own property and resources	• Freedom of selection, marriage choice	OR	• We have freedom to do job, but in some areas, women are still not allowed to avail employment opportunities, but we are lucky enough.
	SW10	• Right to engage in employment	• desire, wish, choice		
			• Working women, status OR economic stability		
			• Family brought up OR child care, family responsibility OR household role		

The above table is about the response provided by the participants against the question about the status of women in Islam as well as in developing society like Pakistan. From the narrative data, all thematic categories demonstrated that Islam gave complete and contentious rights to the women. All of the participants agreed that now in Pakistan trend is also changing from less privileged to Superior status for women. Now women are treated with respect, dignity, honor, and modesty. They have right to get education and employment and easy access to own property and other resources. As one of the participants highlighted that

“I have closely observed that Religious families are giving complete respect and honor to their own irrespective to her education and working status” (Participant A).

Now women are involved in family matters and related decisions. Women is all in all in to deal with all household planning and decisions. As participant said that

“Majorly women have complete access to family matters, she is involved in every matter of the family and its related decisions (Participant C)”.

Previously, female marital decisions were taken by the head of the family and female has no right to interfere in it that creates lot of problems and issues for the couple as well as for the family. The dilemma has been recognized and addresses to some extent. Now females have right to select their life partner on their own choice, they are free to decide when, how and to whom to marry. This all freedom and right is given by our religion Islam. The participants highlighted that status of women positively affect her level of productivity in both domains’ personal productivity and professional output as well.

4.3 Contribution of Women and Productivity level

Table 3. Women contribution

<i>Inductively Developed Thematic Categories</i>				
Category	Code	Thematic Category	Key Terms	Characteristic level 3 responses
Women Contribution	WC1	• Investment in women education	• Spending OR expenses OR burden	• We know that people are reluctant to spend on women education but now the trend is going to change.
	WC2	• More participation to economic needs	• Financial need OR household need, economic support	
	WC3	• More economic independence in urban areas	• Cities OR education in cities OR independent urban women	• Women are contributing in socially and economically both by helping her husband in family financial needs.
	WC4	• Participation in male-dominated professions	• Female everywhere OR no male dominance OR female's success in every field	
	WC5	• Participation increased from 16.4% in 1999-2000 to 31.2% in 2017-18	• Political involvement OR Female ministers, female politicians OR Govt. contribution	• In cities, almost all females are getting education and doing job as compared to villages where females are restricted to home boundaries.
	WC6	• Political empowerment of women	• Doing successful business OR More small businesses, family business	
	WC7	• Participation of women in Govt		• We can see that now females are everywhere even in those professions which are previously dominated by male only.
	WC8	• Women entrepreneurial initiatives		
				• You can observe that our female politicians and ministers are doing great contribution for the country growth, they are side by side with the male politicians.
				• I know that in coming days all small businesses will be dominated by women because they are continuously taking successful business initiatives.

The above section is all about contribution of women in personal development, domestic development, family development as well as country development and growth. This contribution motivates women for more hard work and productivity level for personal and professional domains both. From the narrative feedback of participants, it has been identified that now spending on women grooming and education has increased in order to make her capable to compete in this competitive era.

Women's contribution has now been recognized as a significant contributor in economic independence of family especially in urban areas as highlighted by one of the participants in following words;

"Women are contributing in socially and economically both by helping her husband in family financial needs. In cities, almost all females are getting education and doing job as compared to villages where females are restricted to home boundaries" (Participant G).

One of the most important information facts is that now women can be seen in those professions which were previously considered as male dominated such as Journalism, IT, banking, engineering and Politics (Duflo, 2012). According to Federal Bureau of Statistics (2017-2018), the women Participation has now increased from 16.4% in

1999-2000 to 31.2% in 2017-18 (Arvate, Galilea, & Todescat, 2018). One of the participants mentioned that now women participation can be observed in every domain as political efforts, representation in Govt. as Ministers. She expressed her feelings as;

“You can observe that our female politicians and ministers are doing great contribution for the country growth, they are side by side with the male politicians. I know that in coming days all small businesses will be dominated by women because they are continuously taking successful business initiatives” (Participant J & I).

Now women are contributing professionally by doing jobs as well as started their own small business initiatives/businesses with small of capital to meet the economic and social needs of self and others. The above-mentioned facts draw our attention towards the role of women in development of self, family, society and economy as well (Hughes, 2018).

4.1. Marital status and Professional Productivity

Table 4. Marital Status

Inductively Developed Thematic Categories							
Category	Code	Thematic Category		Key Terms	Characteristic level 3 responses		
Marital Status	MS1	•	Obligatory religious family practice	•	Important religious practice OR family trend	•	As we all know, being a Muslim marriage is the most important religious practice and duty for all of us.
	MS2	•	Declined early marriages trend	•	Early marriages OR reduced OR change	•	In our traditional conservative society, early marriage is a custom that restrict females from the education as well as employment opportunities.
	MS3						
	MS4	•	Effect economic independence	•	Lot of burden, full of responsibilities or too much to do	•	Marriage is very challenging responsibility that increase family burden and duties all the time.
	MS5	•	Increased family responsibilities	•	Professional life disturbed, Less efficiency OR ineffective	•	We can't ignore the fact that marriage effect economically independency of women as well it negatively effects the professional efficiency of the women.
	MS6	•	Reduced professional efficiency	•	Challenging job OR difficult to manage	•	According to me, married working women had a higher productivity level due to their learning of time and work management over the years.
	MS7	•	Learn multitasking	•	Work management OR Jhansi ki Rani, multitasking		
		•	Work-life balance as challenge				

This part of the interview was focused on identifying the marital status of the respondents and to unearth their perspective about whether marital status had any impact on the performance of working women or not. There were two prevalent themes in this section. The first prevalent theme was the impact of marital status on the performance of working women. The research concluded that it is an obligatory religious practice that has many positive effects. They believed that that single working women were far more productive and efficient in their professional sphere as a result of them being virtually domestic responsibility free.

“Comparing a single working woman to a married working woman in media, the prior does not have a lot of household responsibilities; meanwhile the latter has to cater to a lot of household and family related concerns. There are more problems if a woman is a mother; so single working women are more efficient.” (Respondent C).

Meanwhile, some respondents were of the view that married working women had a higher productivity level due to their learning of time and work management over the years, a greater number of respondents still sided with the aforementioned conclusion. This has been seconded by (Riaz and Ishaq, 2015), who also studied the problems working women encounter. The author highlights that working women are burdened with household responsibilities, which makes work-life balance a task impossible to attain, retain, and sustain. This further been backed by research conducted by Cooky, Messner, and Hextrum (2013); the authors shed light upon how the concept of self-actualization

is contorted in the lives of married women as they are constantly convoluted between fulfilling their household and professional responsibilities efficiently, which rarely happens.

The section brought to light that the pressure exerted by husband and parents in law, or even the parents of the respondents, to quit the work post marriage was about eleven recurring in the responses provided by the respondents, hinting towards the problematic approach towards professional advancements of women in the society.

“Initially, my in laws and husband demanded that should women stop working as a news reporter after marriage, but after a few years I need to start my job to contribute in finances.” (Participant G)

Most respondents claimed that they lacked support from their parents and/or parents in law and this was ultimately affecting their morale and performance (Cann & Mohr, 2001). This was mainly due to concurrent requests by parents and/or parents in law to quit working and take care of their domicile responsibilities. While their mixed reviews on this, a unified theme based on the majority of the responses emerged where the husbands of the respondents were, often, found to be proud of independence and professional stature of wives.

4.4 Family Structure, Household Dynamics and Productivity Level

Table 5. Family Structure & Household Dynamics

Inductively Developed Thematic Categories				
Category	Code	Thematic Category	Key Terms	Characteristic level 3 responses
Family Structure and Household Dynamics	FS1	• Family as important institution of society	• Like organization, institution, define roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For me, family is the most important institution that determine the women role, responsibility and authority within the home jurisdiction. Family structure and dynamics depends upon the class, and its living standards that define the family systems and working patterns. Usually in our society, family resources and decisions are male dominated in which female is mostly restricted from getting education or excel in professional field. Female need permission for her basic rights like education and employment irrespective of the family traditions. Women has to perform lot of responsibilities from childcare to services to all extended family members. She can be get rid of this. She has to tackle both professional and personal responsibilities simultaneously.
	FS2	• Depends upon living conditions	• Standard, condition OR living patterns	
	FS3	• Joint family system	• Extended family system OR Joint	
	FS4	• Male dominance to control the family resources	• Restrictions OR limits, conflicts, disputes	
	FS5	• Conflicting restrictions	• Permission OR consent OR approval, authority	
	FS6	• Family permission for basic rights	• Responsibility, duty OR obligation	
	FS7	• Childcare responsibilities	• Brought up, childcare, welfare	
	FS8	• Additional family responsibilities		

This section of data collection, again, had following thematic categories which highlighted the role of family structure, household dynamics and responsibilities in professional performance that further highlights sub themes on multiple roles played by female workers and the stress born by these participants. The first emergent theme was that household work, indeed, affects professional performance of working women.

“I have to ensure that my children reach home on time from school, and husband is able to settle down after work properly if he comes home early. I have to keep checking up on my maid to ensure all the household work is done efficiently and effectively and this keeps my brain very preoccupied.” (Participant A).

Although family is the most important institution that defines roles, responsibilities and authorities of women that are dependent upon the household dynamics and family structure. Mostly household resources and decisions are dominated by male head of the family in which females are the just doer especially in joint family systems. In joint

family systems, females have to bear restrictions for personal and professional desires that creates conflict and disturbing situations for them. One of the participants shed light on this fact as;

“Usually in our society, family resources and decisions are male dominated in which female is mostly restricted from getting education or excel in professional field. Female need permission for her basic rights like education and employment irrespective of the family traditions’ (Participant B & F).

The second emergent theme discovered in this section was that professional performance and responsibilities affect household productivity and performance of working females. The respondents complained about how work stress was a parasite which bothered them at home too, and if professional work had to be taken home, it was far worse.

“I find it difficult and feel stressed to manage households and employment tasks at the same time.” (Participant C)

Hakim (2016), that discuss about the role conflict theory, states that the varying roles of women, inter-roles and intra-roles, along with the unrealistic expectations attached to them not only result in the failure of the fulfillment of the later, but also a lot of physical and psychological stress upon the women, who are constantly struggling to ensure a harmonious integration of their domestic and professional lives.

4.5 Workplace Burden and Productivity Level

Table 6. Workplace Burden and Responsibilities

<i>Inductively Developed Thematic Categories</i>				
Category	Code	Thematic Category	Key Terms	Characteristic level 3 responses
Workplace Responsibilities and Burden	WR1	• Economic independence &	• Status, finance, relations OR position	• Trends are now going to change; families are more in working and professional to get economic independence and social status in the society.
	WR2	• Social status		
	WR3	• Workplace efficiency	• Performance OR output, quick, competency OR efficiency	• In workplace, we have to perform efficiently and effectively that needs competency and quick output for survival.
	WR4	• Workplace targets and deadlines		
	WR5	• Multi-tasking		
	WR6	• Additional charge	• Extra work, no JD, additional duties, multiple roles	• We are performing additional roles to compete with our male colleagues where we have to report to multiple bosses and supervisors. We can't claim any relaxation just because of our gender and family responsibilities.
	WR7	• Multiple bosses and supervisors	• Multiple bosses OR Supervisors, reporting to many people	• In order to beat stiff workplace competition, we have to meet senior's expectations. They are giving hard and strict deadlines to check our competency level.
	WR8	• Workplace expectations	• Senior expectations OR hope, potential, demands	• At workplace, everyone has to follow strict rules, regulations and policies that are equally defined for males and females and we have to give extra timings.
	WR9	• Strict rules and policies	• Policies, rules OR regulations or principles	• Majority of the time, we are working late night to meet deadlines. Females are not given any time relaxation; we have to work for late timings without any overtime payment.
		• Strict work timings	• Extra timing OR overtime, no fix time OR late timings OR late-night duties	

The above section presented the thematic categories about the outcomes of workplace burden and responsibilities. The narrative feedback given by participants make us aware about the positive aspects of professional life as it given economic as social independence to the media working women. Women need to work with full

efficiency and hard work in order to survive in highly competitive working environment as highlighted by one the participant as;

“In workplace, we have to perform efficiently and effectively that needs competency and quick output for survival” (Participant D).

Another thematic category depicted that media working women having workplace burden and responsibilities by performing additional duties. They have to report multiple bosses and dealing with different job task to meet the hard deadlines. Media females are facing workplace challenges that negatively affect their level of productivity (personal and professional both) as discussed by participant I as;

“We are performing additional roles to compete with our male colleagues where we have to report to multiple bosses and supervisors. We can’t claim any relaxation just because of our gender and family responsibilities” (Participant I).

The narrative explanation of media working women enlightened that females have to work late night for extra hours without any extra payment side by side with the male colleagues. They were not given any relaxation for their domestic responsibilities that creates psychological, physical and emotional pressure and ultimately affect productivity level. Media working women are in domestic and professional sphere having full of responsibilities and burden that can either merge or clash (Soderlund, Surlin, & Romanow, 1989). Women were treated as ‘Jhansi ki Rani’ to do quality multitasking with zero mistake to maintain her personal and professional field smooth. She has to meet the expectations of all stakeholders (family, social circle, workplace colleagues, supervisor, subordinates etc.).

4.6 Workplace behaviors (Attitude of Colleagues) and Productivity Level

Table 7. Workplace Behaviors

Inductively Developed Thematic Categories				
Category	Code	Thematic Category	Key Terms	Characteristic level 3 responses
Attitude of Colleagues and Employees	AC1	• Collaborative workplace environment	• Cooperative, OR Collective, Collaborative OR combined gathering	• I found really supportive and collaborative environment, people are usually helpful for each other during projects and official task.
	AC2	• Supportive behavior	• Helpful OR accommodating OR caring, supportive	
	AC3	• Emotional bonding		• As per my experience, people are emotionally attached with each other in friendship circles, having strong bonding and relationship that make workplace environment comfortable for them.
	AC4	• Gender Discrimination	• Relationship OR friendship, strong bonding, attachment	
	AC5	• Caste Biasness	• Differentiation, gender issue, language barrier, caste humiliation, jokes	
	AC6	• Personality differentiation		
	AC7	• Social exclusion	• Separate, OR social elimination, rejection OR exclusion	
			• A lot of the times I have come across women with zero experience and lack of professional or corporate knowledge being given preference over experience and skilled women, just because the prior has a presentable outlook. This feels very degrading and disrespectful.	

-
- I don't think so. The external environment of our country is not safe and you can see that from watching t.v and the news about what is happening to adolescents.
 - Most of the time, my media colleagues feel me excluded and rejected in their social gatherings and their friendship circles. That is quite irritating and disturbing for me. I am working like robot, no social activity that might be due to personality differentiation.
-

The employers and colleagues were found to be supportive and helpful throughout all segments and sectors of work, to which all of the respondents belonged to. Not even a single respondent claimed to be lacking supportive behavior at the hands of their employers or fellow co-workers. What must be pinpointed is that the respondents emphasized on the type and degree of discrimination which exist in the work environment in Pakistan. From participants' perceptions it was discovered that there are following types of discriminations present in the Pakistani work space: gender discrimination; language discrimination, and discrimination based on looks/personality discrimination.

"The gender bias is very prevalent which prevents producers and directors from giving field work, which obviously means you are losing out on opportunities to earn more commission." (Participant D)

"A lot of the times I have come across women with zero experience and lack of professional or corporate knowledge being given preference over experience and skilled women, just because the prior has a presentable outlook. This feels very degrading and disrespectful." (Participant B)

Mostly, media working women found an emotional bonding with their colleagues having friendship and social networks to make workplace more comfortable and relaxed. While some of them complained about social exclusion by using following expressions;

"Most of the time, my media colleagues feel me excluded and rejected in their social gatherings and their friendship circles. That is quite irritating and disturbing for me. I am working like robot, no social activity that might be due to personality differentiation" (Participant F).

According to Hafez (2012), second category pay scale working women often receive preferential treatment, or in areas of the profession where merit and expertise are valued, women are valued. It is notice worthy how the respondents in our research were of the same category and did not complain about getting problems at their workplace. However, Sheffer and Schultz (2007) does pinpoint the problem of workplace harassment and sometimes preference in terms of looks, even in a field as complex and convoluted as medicine.

4.7 Correlation among Thematic Variables

Table 8. Correlation

Variable	Status of women (SW)	Women Contribution (WC)	Marital Status (MS)	Family structure and Household dynamics (FS)	Workplace responsibilities & Burden (WR)	Attitude of Colleagues and employee (AC)	Productivity Level (PL)
Status of women (SW)	_____						
Women Contribution (WC)	.23**	_____					
Marital Status (MS)	.31**	.47**	_____				
Family structure and Household dynamics (FS)	.52**	.54**	.36**	_____			
Workplace responsibilities & Burden (WR)	.43**	.17**	.29**	.25**	_____		
Attitude of Colleagues and employee (AC)	.12**	.49**	.19**	.37**	.61**	_____	
Productivity Level (PL)	.37**	.61**	-.13**	.24**	-.46**	-.09**	_____

Table 4.8 presents the correlation of each of the scale of thematic variables and one outcome variable; productivity level. The thematic variables included; status of women, women contribution, marital status, family structure & dynamics, workplace responsibilities & burden, workplace behavior. The table output reflected the significance association of thematic variables, its strength and direction of association. All thematic variables represented the positive significant association with each other as (Test value ranges between .12** - .61**) that shows the weak to moderate association between thematic variables with no autocorrelation. Furthermore, we can observe that status of women and women contribution has positive significant moderate association with productivity level (test values are .37* & .61**). While remaining thematic variables have negative association with productivity of media working women (see table 4.8).

4.8 Regression Analysis (Direct Effect)

Table 9. Regression

Hypothesis tested	Independent variables	Dependent Variables (Productivity Level)		Remarks
		β coefficients	P-value	
H1	Status of women (SW)	.814	0.000	Significant
H2	Women Contribution (WC)	.574	0.010	Significant
H3	Marital Status (MS)	-.234	0.021	Significant
H4	Family structure and Household dynamics (FS)	-.310	0.000	Significant
H5	Workplace responsibilities & Burden (WR)	-.271	0.032	Significant
H6	Attitude of Colleagues and employee (AC)	-.138	0.009	Significant
Adjusted R ²		0.55		
F-Statistics		107.83*		

The above table 4.9 presents the regression results that is conducted to determine the direct effect of thematic variables (as independent variables) on outcome variable (as dependent variable). The output given in the form of β coefficients & P-value; as it represents that All thematic variables have significant relationship with productivity level of media working women. The status of women and women contribution have positive significant effect on

productivity (β coefficients=.814 & P-value=.0000 for SW & β coefficients=.574 & P-value=.0010 for WC) but marital status, family structure, workforce burden and attitude of colleagues have negative significant effect on media women's productivity level (β coefficients=-.234 & P-value=.0020 for MS & β coefficients=-.310 & P-value=.0000 for FS, β coefficients=-.271 & P-value=.0032 for WR & β coefficients=-.138 & P-value=.0009 for AC). The value of Adjusted R^2 is 0.55 that shows 55% overall contribution in productivity level due to selected thematic variables and overall model is good-fit enough (as expressed by F-Statistics=107.83*).

5. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Pakistani society and its patriarchal nature and ideologies are two of the main reasons why female participation in the labor force is very low. The women interviewed belonged to category II of the employment package, which means they were employed in highly skilled designations, who were still exposed to the chauvinistic and suffocating perspectives of working women by the society. This study has articulated the working females while discussing the status of women, it becomes very obvious that Pakistan is juggling between repressive norms, traditions, social ties and borrowed modernization. Because of lack of knowledge the religion has taken up the 'non-Islamic' traditions of the land and is justifying such continuance. On the other hand, one can say that like any other post-colonial society modernization has been imposed on Pakistan, therefore the society has not fully changed from within. Therefore, the constant tussle between the two is taking its toll on the female population. Mostly women participation increased from 16.4% in 1999-2000 to 31.2% in 2017-18 of the work forces and some of them have started working equally to men in different sectors of life like education, health and even media along with household activities. However, despite their contribution, their roles have been denied in the society

The results concluded that factors like: lack of support from family; extensive work-life imbalance due to extended role expectations; disintegrating social status of women; increasing harassment; and professional discrimination on the basis of gender; identified as the key influences for low female employment participation rate in Pakistan. The respondents were accepting of the fact that the reason why female to male ratio of the labor force is solely due to the lack of support and morale boost from their families. Married working women were exposed to a greater deal of negative cognitive growth as a result of unsupportive relatives and the excessive burden of work-life balance. These employees appear not to allow themselves to be overridden by the destructive nature of conflict. Instead, they make use of the inherent good to improve their work because they believe that their presence is essentially for the progress of work. Another refreshing revelation was commitment towards work which ran through all the media organizations regardless of being private, state-owned, print or electronic. Other attitudinal changes that came out were decrease in cooperation and decrease in output by employees in Dunya, Geo, Neo, ARY, Dawn, News1, Waqt, Capital T.V., Waqt, City 42. and ineffectiveness and inefficiencies affecting productivity. Pakistan is a feudal-tribal state governed by caste and class hierarchies. When it comes to the lives of women, these cultural imperatives are paramount even in face of religious instructions that give women right to education, work, choose their partners in marriage, and inherit property etc.

6. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This research paper brings to light major concerns, according to the society in terms of female vocational and personal development. This paper can aid the human resource management departments in various sectors and organizations to alter their employment programs for women in order to facilitate their work-life balance. This is important as it can aid in the increase of female labor force participation, as a result of changes in policies like: flexible working hours for female employees; added facilities (pick and drop, daycare, etc.). Moreover, it can also provide policy implications for the government of Pakistan to look into the matter of female harassment in the society. By looking at the data collected, it is apparent that harassment by male counterparts is at an all-time high in the society. The government can pass laws which can ensure increased security of women in the society, thereby giving a push to the amount of female participation in the country's workforce.

6.1 Limitations of the study

The study made conclusions and recommendations on the basis of a meager sample set. By using a small sample size, there exists the problem of generalization and inaccuracies.

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